

COMMON SENSE
about

INTERIORS





Introduction

Principles of Decoration

The Aim



THE AIM of the wood finisher is to get as beautiful and as harmonious effects as possible with as little expense of money and labor as he may.

At the same time it must be remembered that there is "no excellence without labor," and that however good the material used there must be proper labor in preparing the surface and in performing the work.

It does not follow that a high degree of skill is necessary or that a large expense must be incurred in order to give tasteful and harmonious results. Very often the inexperienced workman who follows closely and intelligently the directions of the manufacturer will secure better results than the more experienced workman who does not give thought and effort.

Rare woods and most hard woods are expensive and usually require much labor to finish them properly. The beautiful ivory-like surfaces seen in kings' palaces have been accomplished by much labor, often ten or twelve or even fifteen coats having been given, with the proper rubbings, before this result is obtained. But the paint and varnish manufacturer of today has been able to provide materials and methods which will make the home beautiful and still be within the ability of the average house owner to possess.

It takes more than money to secure good taste. The many home magazines and the booklets published by The Lowe Brothers Company, like "Attractive Homes and How to Make Them," etc., are helping to educate the home maker to the truest taste.

Harmony

Since decoration does not exist for its own sake but is intended to assist in emphasizing the purpose of each part of the house, there should be in it meaning as well as beauty.

Color and style are the two important questions in all interior finish. No general rules can be offered—as each house, and oftentimes each room, must be studied in itself. The aim is to make the entire house cheerful and harmonious. Dark rooms must have one treatment and light rooms another. There ought to be plenty of color and yet no discord or garishness. The essential thing is good taste.

The greatest thoughtfulness in decoration may be overcome by mistakes in furnishing; hence the furniture should be as carefully studied as the decoration.

Accomplishment

If the room is dark, use light colorings; if light, darker colorings may be used. If on the sunny side of the house, use the cooler colors; if on the north or shaded side, use the warmer colors.

As the upper part of the room is darker than the lower, the ceiling should be lighter than the walls, and very often the upper part of the walls should be lighter than the lower. The natural gradation is from floor to wall, frieze and ceiling. The woodwork to give best effect should harmonize with this arrangement, as a rule being darker than the wall except where white or very light enamels are used on the woodwork.



The decoration of the walls is usually accomplished by wallpaper or paint. Where wallpaper is used it may be either figured or plain. Extreme care must be used in the former case that the figures are not too large for the room and that they do not have too many colors. In the latter case the work is simpler and as a rule more attractive.

The tendency today for decorative and sanitary reasons, is to use dull flat, soft colors that can be obtained best by painting.

The introduction of finish like Lowe Brothers "Mellotone" has simplified the attainment of beautiful effects.

If the room is low, vertical lines in the paper and clear wall in painting will give the appearance of height. If the room is high, lines around the room, like chair rail at the usual height or picture moulding at the top of the door, help to decrease the height.

Reds, yellows and orange are known as advancing colors; that is, they stand out and make the room seem smaller. Blues, grays and greens are receding colors and add to the effect by seeming to increase the size of the room. Light green or gray is therefore better than orange for a narrow hall or for a smaller room in which extended effect is needed.

In painting walls, or even in papering, the custom is to paint the entire wall in one color and the ceiling in another. The narrow picture moulding at the corners is therefore painted the color of the ceiling. Sometimes where there is a high ceiling, the picture moulding is carried around at the top of the doors and windows, or a foot or so from the top of the wall. Below this is the solid color of the wall and above, the color of the ceiling.

Remember in every case to maintain harmony of walls and woodwork in color and design, and also of draperies, rugs and furniture. Mahogany woodwork and red walls are almost sure to clash. Oak and green may be good. Pine does not look well with buff, while the same woodwork and greens are restful. All effects should be carefully studied before finishing. Take the advice of a good architect or competent decorator when there is a question of judgment.

Kinds of Wood used for Finish and Floors

The beauty of the finish depends largely upon the kind and condition of the woods used and the care taken in their treatment. When forests were more abundant than now, the number of woods regarded good enough for building was very limited. Now many others are found to be beautiful.

Quarter and Plain Sawed

The difference between plain sawed and quarter sawed woods, particularly oak, makes the latter popular for fine work. Plain sawed lumber is secured by sawing a log lengthwise into as

many boards as possible. Quarter sawed lumber is secured by first sawing the log into quarters, lengthwise, and then sawing these quarters into boards of varying widths. These latter show the grain of the wood with the finest effects, but make the lumber much more expensive.



Open and Close Grain

For finishing purposes, woods are generally known as open and close grained. The open grained woods are usually hard woods, and the close grained, soft, though there are exceptions to this division. The leading building and finishing woods may be arranged thus:

Open-Grained Woods

ASH. Good for interior woodwork or frames—not for floors. May be stained with good effect. Does not take paint well.

MAHOGANY. One of the most beautiful woods for woodwork or furniture. Various grades—some beautiful and hard, some spongy.

OAK. By far the most popular wood for fine interior finish in all parts of the house, floors and furniture, because of its grain, figure, color, susceptibility to good finish, and medium price. It is hard, either white or red in color, and lends itself to staining in many different ways. Does not take paint well.

WALNUT. A most beautiful wood for dark finish or furniture, but its scarcity makes it expensive. It is hard, takes a fine

finish, and is particularly good for dining room, library or large dignified decoration.

CHESTNUT. Good for woodwork, but too soft and spongy for floors.

CHERRY. A beautiful wood for woodwork, taking stain well and making handsome finish whether kept in natural reddish tone or in mahogany color.

Close Grained Woods

BIRCH, Red or Black. Very popular for interior finish and furniture—not so good for floors. It is especially beautiful when stained mahogany. It has a very fine grain, is often beautifully figured, and takes a high polish.

BASS WOOD OR WHITE WOOD. Used for interior finish, generally when enamel or paint is to be used over it.

POPLAR, White or Red. For woodwork or for exterior siding. It is quite soft; expands and contracts quite a little so that it must be put on when very dry; has a fine grain; takes paint and enamel better than pine, and makes a good effect with stains, especially Cherry, Mahogany, etc. It is the best of all woods for paint.

PINE. The most widely used of building woods because of its low price, easy working qualities, and readiness to take stain or paint. There are many varieties in this country, the most generally used being southern, Oregon, white, yellow and red. It is used for interior finish, floors, and exterior work. It has a beautiful grain; may be stained in almost any of the popular colors with excellent effect; in natural finish it is generally beautiful, and is so used more than any other wood.

CYPRESS. A very common wood for both exterior and interior. It is good for finish but too soft for floors. It is of peculiar nature with large quantities of rosin and methylene. It is difficult to make paint stick to it and the grain is apt to rise. Special care is necessary to assure absolute dryness before painting or varnishing.

SYCAMORE. A beautiful soft wood for interior woodwork. It takes stain well.

MAPLE. A very hard and very close grained wood, particularly popular for floors. It takes varnish and stain well.

CALIFORNIA REDWOOD. A beautiful soft wood, sometimes finished in natural color and sometimes in stains for mahogany, weathered and green effects. A beautiful light red wood, hard enough for woodwork and floors. Is generally used for woodwork and furniture, especially with mahogany finish.

First Things in Finishing

Selecting the Wood and Determining the Finish

New



THE CHOICE of wood to be used for finish and floors will be controlled largely by the cost or the special uses of the room. The chapter on woods has already indicated something of the variety of choice for American builders and the best things for various uses.

The wood chosen will determine, in part at least, the finish. Pine, birch, oak, etc. lend themselves to proper stains, while poplar and similar woods are particularly good for enameling, painting, or flat finishing. "Little Blue Flag" Varnish may be used on all these to give the natural effect.

Old

If the work is refinishing old woodwork or floors, there is no choice of woods, but of various methods of treating the wood already at hand. Even this may be given the effect of grained wood by one of the numerous methods now used. It should be noted, however, that it is very difficult to give to old work that has been painted a new appearance of natural wood that has never been covered. It may sometimes be done by careful graining.

The enamels and flat finishes offered by The Lowe Brothers Company now make the solution of the old-painted-wood problem a comparatively easy one, for it is hard to find anything more beautiful than woodwork finished with "Linduro," Vernicol Enamel White, Interior Enamel in colors, or "Mellotone" Flat Colors, white or tints. These are as durable as varnish, as easy to keep clean, and may be made to harmonize with any scheme of wall decoration and hangings. With these finishes for the woodwork and "Mellotone" Flat Colors for the walls, a wide range of choice is given by Lowe Brothers Products, assuring beautiful effects.

Preparing the Surface

New

Wood as it is turned over by the carpenter, particularly machine sanded, even though specified to be perfectly smooth, is as a rule not fit to receive proper finish.

The first essential to beautiful effects is a perfectly smooth surface; therefore before filling either hard or soft wood—woodwork, floor or furniture—the surface must be carefully sandpapered with fine sandpaper, rubbing across the grain as well as with it, brushing off carefully all dust, then going over it again and again, brushing until it is perfectly smooth and clean.

Not only must the surface be smooth, but it must be dry, clean and free from sap. If the room is damp and the wood moist, paint or varnish will not cling to it. If it is greasy, even from the slight touch of unclean hands, the finish will be likely to come off. All this must have attention when the sandpapering is to be done. So if the wood is green or the sap not all removed, the drying out, which will come through use and exposure to the air, will raise the grain and make the surface rough or the paint peel.

Old

For new work the preparation of the surface is a comparatively simple process, only requiring plenty of labor. When the work is one of refinishing it becomes more difficult, but far more important.

The aim must be to put the surface into practically the same condition as new wood, for with this done the process of finishing will be in general the same for both old and new wood.

If the old wood has been varnished it must be sandpapered down, removing all the old varnish and making the surface clean and smooth. At times it is necessary to remove entirely the paint or varnish before the new coat is put on. Best results are thus assured by having the painter remove all the old coats. In these days many forms of paint and varnish removers are available but these should be used with extreme care. All evidence of the remover should be removed before the painting is done.

Take out all grease spots or discolored places. When these appear on soft wood they should be washed two or three times with benzine and wiped dry. If the wood is hard, such as oak, etc., it is best first to wash the spots with vinegar and then benzine, before applying any coating. In all cases the wood

should be allowed to become perfectly dry before the paint is put on. When thoroughly dry proceed as if the work was new.

If the old work is painted, thorough sandpapering and cleaning must be given first and all loose paint must be removed.

It may be necessary to burn off the paint, not only to remove the finish but to assure a dry surface free from sap.

The wood should be made perfectly smooth so that when the finish is put upon it, it will present a clear, hard surface.



Putting on the Finish

Methods of Finishing



THE OPEN grained woods should be filled before being finished. The close grained woods, when stained, should have a liquid stain put on according to directions. The varnish or other finish should follow.

When these are to be finished "natural," a liquid filler like Transparent Varnish Primer may be used for first coat, or the varnish may be put directly upon the surface.

In using fillers and stains, care should be taken to preserve the proper relations of the finished wood and the original. For example, oak will not look well if stained mahogany, nor will poplar be very satisfactory with oak stain. Birch is most beautiful with mahogany stain, poplar will take mahogany, green, etc., and pine may be treated with oak stain, either light, dark or Flemish, or with walnut.

Natural Finish

Preserving and illuminating the appearance and grain of the wood as nearly as possible.

If open grained wood is used, it should be filled first with Lowe Brothers Paste Filler, Light Oak.

When the filler has been properly used according to directions, the pores being well filled, the surface should be smoothed carefully with sandpaper and then varnished with "Little Blue Flag" Varnish, using the particular varnish suited to the location and the uses of the wood.

NOTE.—"Little Blue Flag" General Purpose Varnish is a very elastic durable varnish, suited to the best work for both exterior and interior.

"Little Blue Flag" Elastic Interior Varnish is a medium drying varnish for indoor use, with high lustre and great durability.

"Little Blue Flag" Quick Action House Varnish No. 64 is a quick drying varnish of light color, which becomes very hard. It is suitable for interior woodwork that must be handled.

"Little Blue Flag" Inside Rubbing Varnish is a quick hardening varnish for indoor work, especially for use where dead or dull finish is desired.

“Little Blue Flag” Durable Floor Varnish, prepared especially for floors, is very good for surfaces requiring hard wear.

“Little Blue Flag” Spar Varnish is the best wearing varnish possible for outside use in all climates.

If close grained wood is used, apply the varnish as above directly to the wood, giving three or more coats.

NOTE.—If economy is desired, the first coat may be Lowe Brothers Transparent Varnish Primer, which is a very good liquid filler.

If a rubbed surface, that is, a dead or dull finish, is desired, on either soft or hard wood, use the Inside Rubbing Varnish as indicated above. “Rubbing” requires experience and as a rule only expert painters are competent to give a satisfactory finish of this kind.

The natural finish of wood is popular in all parts of the house, and is almost always used in kitchens or exposed portions of the building.

Where rubbed finish is desired, it is wisest, as a rule, in order to obtain more durable results to give at least one more coat than for gloss finish. When the last coat is properly hardened, it may be rubbed with pumice stone and water for a dull finish: or rubbed with pumice stone and oil for an eggshell (or semi-gloss) finish. Good results in either case require an experienced painter.

Stain

Giving such tones and colors as may be desired—Light Oak, Dark Oak, Golden Oak, Flemish Oak, Light or Dark Mahogany, Cherry, Walnut, etc. These may be secured on either open or close grained woods.

Open grained woods should first be filled with Lowe Brothers Paste Filler of the color desired. In most cases the Filler will serve as a stain; in others Lowe Brothers Light Filler may be put on and over this the stain may be used in accord with the directions given on the can.

NOTE.—Lowe Brothers Paste Filler, Light, gives practically the natural color of oak; Paste Filler, Dark, gives the darker effect, especially good for floors; Paste Filler, Golden Oak, secures the popular and handsome dark brown effect, particularly for woodwork and furniture. When other results are wanted the surface may be filled with Light Filler and then a coat of Oil Stain of the color desired may be given, or the Light Filler may be colored to the effect wanted.

For close grained woods, pine, poplar, etc., use the stain directly upon the wood, following instructions upon the can. If the full dark effect of the stain is desired, it may be allowed to dry on the wood, wiping it off carefully after it is well flat. If not so dark a result is desired, the stain should be allowed to set, and then before it is dry should be wiped off carefully with a soft cloth.

After twenty-four hours or more the wood may be finished with varnish as instructed above (See Natural Finish.) For the handsome dull finish which is so popular, use the "Little Blue Flag" Inside Rubbing Varnish, rubbing in the proper manner.

Stain is very popular in halls, living rooms, dining rooms, and in schools, churches, large lodge rooms, etc. It lends itself very well to varied plans of decoration.

Enamel—Gloss or Flat

A popular form of finish for woodwork in all parts of the house. Enamel is a varnish paint and combines the variety of colors of the paint with the solid finish of the varnish. It is used now in every part of the house, from the hall, with its Ivory or White, to the bedrooms in White or Tints and the kitchen in darker colors. It is economical, being hard drying and glossy, and easily cleaned. Poplar and other soft woods are generally used for enameling. Enamel is finished either in gloss, egg-shell gloss (semi-gloss effect), or flat (the popular dull surface).



In finishing put on a priming coat of "High Standard" Flat White; follow with two or more coats of the same, according to the quality of the work, and then finish with one or two coats of Vernicol Enamel White, if good work is desired; or with Linduro if the highest quality is wanted. If a hard, dull finish is to be secured, rub the last coat with pumice stone and water. Experience is needed to accomplish the best results in rubbing, and the greater the number of coats the harder and more beautiful will be the finish.

NOTE.—If an economical semi-gloss effect is to be secured, use Lowe Brothers Eggshell Gloss White for the last coat over the Flat

White, or if a flat effect is wanted, use Lowe Brothers "High Standard" Flat White for all coats. No rubbing will be required. If tints are desired in bed rooms and other parts of the house, use Lowe Brothers Flat White tinted with a little of the final color for the under coats, and finish with one coat of Lowe Brothers Interior Enamel Colors, of the required tint. If a flat effect in tints is wanted, use Lowe Brothers "Mellotone" Flat Colors instead of the Interior Enamel Colors.

For registers, steam pipes, radiators, iron brackets, and ornamental necessities use Lowe Brothers Carriage Gloss Paint for a high gloss, hard finish in beautiful colors; use Aluminum paint for silver finish, or Vernicol Stain for imitation of hard wood finish and for black and white surfaces.

Refinishing Old Woodwork

Natural

All old woodwork that has been varnished should be prepared as indicated on page 9. The finishing with varnish may then follow according to instructions for new work on page 11.

Stain

The old woodwork should be prepared as indicated on page 9. If the wood is not in condition for staining directly—that is, if it is so spotted or worn that the stain on the natural wood will not look well, it will be best to give it a coat or two of Vernicol Ground Color. Over this may be put a coat of Vernicol Stain, of color selected, flowing it on carefully. Care must be taken to avoid laps. If a darker finish of the same color is desired, two coats may be used instead of one, sandpapering slightly between coats.

Graining

The present method of graining old woodwork is simple. The use of Graining Color, with special tools, over the Ground Color, is popular and inexpensive. Over the Graining Color use Vernicol Stain of color desired, following instructions in special booklet.

Painting

An inexpensive and durable finish for old woodwork is "High Standard" Liquid Paint. Two coats should be given, allowing plenty of time between coats to dry and harden.

Enamel

One of the best and most attractive methods for old woodwork is enamel, gloss or flat, put on as indicated on page 13. Remember that a gloss finish will show inequalities much more than flat, so that if the woodwork cannot be made perfectly smooth, it may be best to use flat finishes.

Treatment of Floors

Getting Ready



CT UPON the old rule—first select your wood, then prepare the wood, and when plenty of time has been taken for these two things, you may begin to think of finishing. The great difficulty with most builders is that decisions regarding the finish of the floors are left until the last, when the owner is in a hurry to get in and the builder is given but a few days to do the work. At the same time, he demands from the painter the beautifully finished floors he has seen in some home where weeks of time were given to accomplish the results.

Handsome floors are secured only at large cost of labor, time, patience and judgment, to say nothing of the money to be expended.

The usual floors now-a-days are “hard wood floors.” This generally means maple, oak, or southern pine—ordinarily one or both of the last two. For outside floors white pine is probably the best.

Cleaning

“Cleaning a floor” does not mean taking a bucket of water and a mop and using all the water at hand, with the idea that this will make it clean and get it ready for painting. Soaking a floor in this way means ordinarily days of waiting before it is properly dry, with danger then that some of the water still remains in the pores of the wood to be drawn out when the room is thoroughly heated.

Wash the floors as little as possible. New floors usually may be swept thoroughly, and the spots, if any, may be removed by sandpapering. Where the floor must be washed, clear water, with a little ammonia or alcohol, is almost always sufficient. Ammonia must be avoided if possible, because of its tendency to darken the wood or to injure the paint or the varnish. Turpentine may be used to remove stains, particularly those from paint or grease. Remember that the floor must be absolutely dry before the finishing is done if good results are wanted.

At least twenty-four hours should be allowed after cleaning, particularly if any water has been used. If possible, the room should be thoroughly warmed in winter and the temperature kept at the proper degree before any finish is put upon the floor.

Old floors usually require very thorough cleaning. If they have been painted, care must be taken that all old, loose paint is removed. All grease spots and stains of every kind should be removed if the floor is to be varnished. If it is to be painted, care must be taken that grease and moisture are removed. Sandpapering should be freely resorted to in both new and old work, for cleaning and smoothing.

A temperature of at least 70° F. should be maintained in the room when the floor is finished, to avoid injury to varnish or paint.

Finishing New Floors

There are three ways in present use for finishing floors, whether old or new—shellac, wax and varnish. Staining the floor may precede any of these methods. The finishing of old floors depends upon their previous condition, and in addition to those mentioned above may include painting and staining.

Which is the best of the methods for new floors it is perhaps difficult to determine. The first—shellac—is most economical at the beginning, and when good shellac is secured and properly put on it is often quite satisfactory, when not subject to very hard wear. The second—wax—is the time-tried method and has its friends among workmen, but it is expensive, laborious and unsanitary, and must have constant attention. The third—varnish—requires more time and labor at the beginning than the others, but when good varnish is properly used, it will be by far the most durable. The use of varnish is increasing very rapidly, as the experience in American homes proves it to be in every way the most satisfactory.



After cleaning and preparing the wood, the floors should be finished in much the same way as the woodwork of the room. As a rule, however, floors are made of oak, either plain or quartered. These are generally stained to give a dark oak effect, or occasionally to give a green or reddish tinge. This is done before the varnishing in the same manner as indicated for woodwork.

Filling and Staining

The color of the floor is often varied to make it harmonize with the finish of the woodwork of the room. As a rule, however, floors are made of oak, either plain or quartered. These are generally stained to give a dark oak effect, or occasionally to give a green or reddish tinge. This is done before the varnishing in the same manner as indicated for woodwork.

With floors of oak or other open-grained wood, the surface



may be filled with a paste filler of the proper color, or, as is sometimes done, it may be filled with a light filler over which is put a coat of Oil Stain of the color desired, this being rubbed off in the usual method and allowed to dry thoroughly before the shellac or varnish is applied.

Shellac

The advantage of shellac is its ease of application and its quick drying. If the floor must be used in a very short time, Orange or White shellac may be used. The former darkens the wood somewhat and it continues to grow darker with the lapse of time. Good grain shellac should always be used, as it will show heel marks if the very best quality is not used.

Wax

If a waxed floor is desired, the prepared finish of a good manufacturer should be secured and put on in accord with the directions of the manufacturer.

Varnish

Open-grained woods should be filled with the best filler on floors just as on standing woodwork.

Over this filler, when ready, the proper number of coats of varnish are given.

Experience indicates that equally good results may be secured by applying the varnish directly to the wood, even though a greater number of coats may be required on open-grained wood. A filler is never necessary on close-grained woods like pine, poplar, etc., the varnish being applied directly to the wood with perfect satisfaction.

Two or three coats at least, in addition to the priming coat of varnish, should be given to every floor and one should remember that even three coats of varnish will form a film of not over 1-500 of an inch in thickness, and that this will be required to stand the wear of rough shoes, heel nails, sand and dust for months, and often for years of time.

NOTE.—Lowe Brothers "Little Blue Flag" Durable Floor Varnish is made of the highest class of materials and is remarkably tough, is not easily marred or scratched, wears well, and will resist dampness.

The most beautiful floors are secured by rubbing Durable Floor Varnish with oil and pumice stone, giving the soft, dull effect that is regarded as the finest obtainable. This finish has the added advantages of not showing the marks of castors and heavy chairs, and of being unusually durable. The extra expense

of the work at the beginning is fully overcome by the added wear and beauty.

NOTE.—This finish is not possible with ordinary varnish, or with one containing rosin. "Durable Floor" is made with this use in view, and the rubbing secures a most beautiful finish. For this purpose it far surpasses wax. Its use in fine work is increasing because of the confidence of those who know it.

When the floor is to be rubbed, at least two days should be allowed the last coat of varnish for drying and hardening.

Refinishing Old Floors

Paint

If the old floor is quite old or rough or soiled, it may be best to give it a coat of Floor Paint. This may be secured in good and durable tints. The cracks should first be filled with a good crack filler, though it must be remembered that even with good fillers the expanding and contracting of the ordinary floors is likely to cause some of the filler to come out.

NOTE.—Lowe Brothers Hard Drying Floor Paint is a varnish floor paint of the highest quality, and is remarkably durable. It has the combined advantages of good paint pigment and high class varnish.

The painted floors are particularly useful for kitchens, work rooms, etc.

Stain

One of the most popular methods of refinishing old floors at the present time is staining. The old floor should be given one or more coats of Vernicol Ground Color in order to give it a uniform appearance. Over this should be used one coat of Vernicol Varnish Stain, using Light Oak, Dark Oak, Walnut or whatever color may be desired to secure harmony in the finish. Two coats are better than one for floors of this kind, as they will add toughness and durability.

It must be remembered that the use of two coats will make the floor a little darker than one coat over the Ground Color.

NOTE.—Vernicol Floor & Varnish Stain is an unusually tough, durable varnish stain, which gives the proper color and varnish in the same coat. It is economical and satisfactory over soft wood floors, particularly of the old style.

A popular method of improving old floors is to grain them. This may be accomplished by putting on Vernicol Graining Color over the ground color, using a graining tool according to instructions, which any careful person can do. When dry, put on one or two coats of Vernicol Stain of desired color. For best work a coat of "Little Blue Flag" Durable

Floor Varnish should be put on over this. Complete instructions for this popular method of finishing floors may be had upon application.

Care of Floors

The varnished floor is the easiest of all to keep in order. Because of this many householders think that it needs no attention. A little care regularly will assure the varnished floor's lasting for years. The floor should be kept clean with a hair brush, or with a soft cloth tied over the end of a broom, as is the custom with many housekeepers at the present time.

The use of skimmed milk and water in the cleaning of floors once each week or so, rubbing dry with a soft cloth, will retain the lustre. An occasional rubbing with a cloth moistened with raw linseed oil, also adds to the beauty of finished floors.

The varnished floor which has been heavily used may be touched up with a little Lowe Brothers Durable Floor Varnish. Care must be taken that the new coat of varnish runs even with the edge of the boards.

Floors should be varnished at least once a year in places where they receive heavy wear. Before revarnishing old floors on which the varnish or shellac has turned black or is badly stained, the old varnish should be completely removed. When this is done, stains in the wood should be taken out as in the case of new floors. When varnish is used over Stains, care must be taken to have the Stain properly wiped off and the floor thoroughly dry before the varnish is put on.

In revarnishing floors in ordinary condition, when it becomes necessary, the floor should be cleaned with a little turpentine and properly sandpapered to make it smooth, then the spots should be touched up with a little varnish and sandpapered. After this the Durable Floor Varnish may be used satisfactorily.



Finishing the Walls



ALLS are a "background to a picture, and this picture is a room, with furniture to occupy the middle distance, and the foreground peopled by living men, women and children.* *

* * Their qualities as a background depend on many circumstances, such as the room's light, shape and size, its type of architecture, and the needs of its furniture also; because a treatment too ornate to put behind pictures may be a charming background by itself, that is, without pictures."

It is evident that two circumstances must be regarded in choosing the form of decoration; first, whether the wall is to be a setting for pictures, and, second, whether the wall is to be ornamental without pictures. The latter allows some figures on the wall; the former is better with a plain surface.

In these days almost every house has its pictures and ornaments, making plain walls more and more popular. "Devotees of pattern might try to learn that there is safety and pleasure in uniform tints of good color, above all when they value pictures."

The general question of colors to be used in decoration, and the importance of the proper relation of the wall colors to the rest of the room, are discussed in the Introduction, on Page 3.

Flatness, solidity and uprightness are the essential characteristics of a wall, and the decoration should not interfere with these characteristics.

In selecting colors, the dull, soft colors give more permanent satisfaction and harmonize more easily with furnishings than strong, glossy, striking colors which last but a short time. Remember that the walls are the most prominent feature and give tone to the entire room.

It is not necessary for good taste that all rooms be of the same color, but rooms opening into each other should harmonize or have agreeable contrasts. Tans, greens and browns usually harmonize, as do blues and grays. Green and red give agreeable contrasts while reds and orange clash. The stronger the color the more decided the difference.

Living rooms, dining rooms and the first floor generally, require

more decided colors, while bed rooms should be lighter and have the dainty effects that most housekeepers prefer. Kitchens need strong durable colors, not too dark. Bath rooms are best in light

tints, as these assure care and cleanliness.

If the house is large or if you are not sure as to best effects, consult a good decorator.

The best results in practical house decoration are secured by using a permanent flat finish like Lowe Brothers "Mellotone," which has all the soft, comfortable qualities of

water colors, and the permanent, sanitary, washable qualities of oil paint.

Before painting, the walls must be cleaned thoroughly, especially removing grease spots and dirt. Old paint, kalsomine and paper must be cleaned, and the loose paint or paper removed.

Cracks in the walls must be filled with plaster, and knots in the wood covered with shellac.

New walls, whether rough or smooth plaster, should be sized with Lowe Brothers Prepared Wall Size, which is economical, practical and usable. In its place a good varnish size may be used if desired.

This size should be tinted with "Mellotone," about one quart to three quarts of size, to give it about the tint or color of the final coat.

If spots show through the size or first coat of "Mellotone," apply another coat of size over the first, and let this thoroughly dry and harden before putting on the next coat. Allow thirty-six or more hours after sizing for thorough drying and hardening.



Over the size put one or two coats of "Mellotone," allowing at least twenty-four hours between coats for proper drying and hardening.

On many walls in good condition, particularly when darker shades are used, one coat will be sufficient to give the solid color desired. On walls not in good condition, two coats may be needed. As a rule, two coats are preferred to one.

Old walls if painted before and in good condition may not need sizing, and one coat of "Mellotone" may be sufficient. Of course, if light color is used over dark, two coats will probably be required.

If the old walls are not in good condition, they should be thoroughly cleaned and sized. Burlap, canvas or concrete should first be given a coat of size or of "High Standard" Liquid Paint.

"Mellotone" should be applied with a good wall brush in much the same manner as kalsomine. It should be brushed on freely, for it works easily—flowing out smoothly and evenly, and does not show laps.

The colors or tints of "Mellotone" may be modified by any thoughtful painter by mixing colors or by mixing white with tints. In this way an infinite variety of attractive shades may be secured, although the regular colors are in every way satisfactory.



Things to Remember



WOODWORK will be receptive to varnish or stain only when it is dry and warm.

Interior work, when possible, should have a coat of stain or paint on the back as well as on the outer surface before leaving the mill.

Open grained wood should be well filled before the varnish is applied in order that the

surface may be even.

In choosing colors or materials for finishing, select those which will retain their beauty and be permanent. Some finishes, most attractive at the beginning, soon lose their beauty; others do not wear and leave the surface unprotected. The Lowe Brothers finishes are made for service.

Puttying should be done after the first coat. Sandpapering should be done lightly after each coat except the last, in order to keep a perfectly smooth surface.

Varnish should be used exactly as it leaves the factory. Architects and property holders should see that the varnish is brought to the work in sealed cans. "Little Blue Flag" Varnish is put up in sealed cans only.

Shellac should be made of grain alcohol rather than wood alcohol. Do not use shellac as the first coat on outside work or in bath rooms.

All varnishing and enameling should be done with the temperature as nearly 70° F. as possible; never when the temperature is below 50°. The temperature should be kept as uniform as may be possible until the varnish has set.

Be careful to have the surface, whether of woodwork or floors, in perfect condition, i. e. dry and level, before varnishing.

Fair work can only be done with suitable brushes.

If you must be economical, reduce the number of coats of varnish or paint; don't reduce the quality of the material. High-grade varnish, like "Little Blue Flag," is the only safe one, and the same may be said of "High Standard" Paint.

Enamel solves the problem of what to do with old woodwork. It is beautiful, lends itself to proper decorative effects, and is easily kept clean.

Remember that it is not fair to expect one kind of varnish to do all kinds of work. One varnish is made to withstand the weather, and another to last for a lifetime on parlor or library woodwork. Require varnish suited to each purpose. Honorable painters are always ready to assist the architect and owner in securing the best kinds. Unfortunately, there are here and there dishonest painters who will keep on hand empty varnish or enamel cans which are filled from the same barrel whatever may be the specification. Sealed cans are the only safety, and cans of turpentine, benzine, etc. should not be allowed about the work.

In choosing wood for floors, wearing qualities are of prime importance, but that need not interfere with bringing out the beauty of the material.

While the floor is being varnished, the doors and windows should be closed and the temperature should be as nearly 70° as possible. Varnish is especially susceptible to chill and is often ruined because care is not taken when the floor is being finished.

Especial care should be taken when the work is being done not to wear shoes with heavy nails and rough soles. The shoes should be perfectly clean.

In estimating upon the use of any of these products, the painter needs to know their spreading capacity. House paint is usually figured upon the quantity required to cover the surface two coats over the priming coat. Lowe Brothers "High Standard"



Paint covers for priming 600 to 800 sq. ft. per gallon; for the second and third coats it will cover 325 to 350 sq. ft. per gallon

for the two coats. Where the surface has been in particularly good condition it has been known to cover 400 sq. ft. per gallon. "Mellotone" will cover from 225 to 350 sq. ft. two coats, depending upon the condition of the surface.

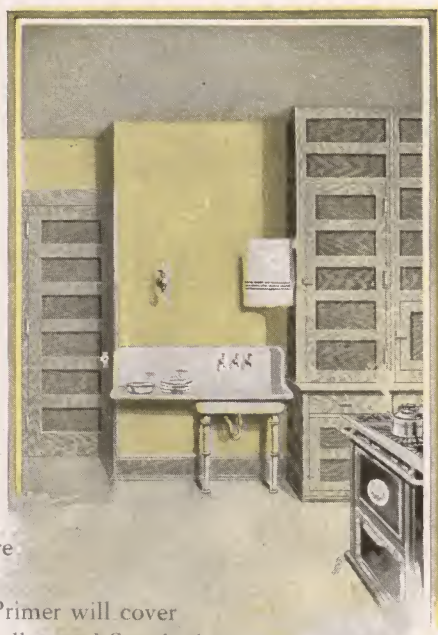
Over ordinary walls (particularly old ones previously painted,) sand finished or rough coated walls, the amount of surface covered will be less, over smooth walls in good condition, greater. If one coat is used, figure on about double the amount of surface.

Varnish paints like "Linduro," Vernicol Enamel White, Interior Enamel, Inside Gloss White, Carriage Gloss, Floor Paint, etc., will cover 250 or more sq. ft. two coats, per gallon; Vernicol Floor & Varnish Stain 300 or more sq. ft. two coats.

Transparent Varnish Primer will cover 300 or more sq. ft., per gallon and Standard Metallic 250 sq. ft. two coats.

The Lowe Brothers Company will be pleased to answer any questions of architect, painter or householder, in order that there may be no misunderstanding as to the best method of using its products.

It is always important to choose the right finish for any work to be done. Quality as well as beauty is essential. The Lowe Brothers Company has from the beginning of its history insisted upon quality, and it has refused to make many classes of products because its experienced and scientific men have demonstrated a lack of quality in some one or more of the essential factors of a durable and satisfactory product. In making suggestions, therefore, this Company will always give a candid judgment, whether it is to the advantage of its products or not. The confidence of users is the first aim of the makers of "High Standard" products.



The After-word



IN THIS booklet many things have been stated which every painter knows, because it is thought best to remind him and his helpers of the little things needed to give best results in home decoration and because this may be a text book for him to use with those whom he is training.

The principles of color and decoration here given are stated with the home in mind. They apply equally to large buildings—office and public buildings, schools, churches, apartments, hospitals, etc., which are now almost universally finished in some of the methods here suggested.

This Company is always ready to give suggestions or advice to those who wish special plans for colors.

The Lowe Brothers Company's oldest department is that of general house paint, for exterior as well as interior. "High Standard" Liquid Paint products have had an enviable reputation for a generation. Though this booklet is devoted to interior finishes, the Company is prepared to give equally careful advice regarding exteriors. "Paint and Painting," "Attractive Homes," and other pamphlets tell the story. They may be had for the asking.

Lowe Brothers' dealer-agents are in almost every community and are prepared to supply the wants of paint users promptly and satisfactorily. They will furnish color cards and suggestions upon request.

The Lowe Brothers Company

Dayton, Ohio
Boston New York Chicago
Kansas City

The Right Finish for Every Surface

Suggestions about Lowe Brothers Products and where to use them

For Exteriors

"High Standard" Liquid Paint *Sixty Colors*

The heaviest bodied paint offered in prepared form. Unsurpassed in covering, spreading, durability, economy and convenience.

Porch Floor Paint *Eight Colors*

A strictly high class oil paint for porch floors, or any surface exposed to the weather. It works easily, dries thoroughly and wears well.

Flat Brick Colors *Three Colors*

For last coat, giving true imitation of natural brick. Permanent colors.

"Little Blue Flag" Spar Varnish

For structures exposed to salt air and spray, front doors, etc.; yachts and boats of all kinds. A better varnish for outside use cannot be made.

"Little Blue Flag" Elastic General Purpose Varnish

Suitable for outside or inside work where great durability is desired.

Linduro

A very high grade, durable, elastic enamel for outside or inside work. The best enamel made.

Standard Barn Paint *Four Colors*

A superior paint with excellent colors. Extremely popular, especially good for shingle roofs, barns, etc.

Standard Metallic Paint

Two Colors

A serviceable paint at low cost, especially for metal roofs, bridges, etc.

For Interiors

Linduro

The best enamel made for fine finishes.

Interior Enamel Colors

Fourteen Shades

Beautiful colors for inside house decoration. including wood-work and walls. Adapted to harmonious effects. Give glossy enamel surface.

Vernicol Enamel White

For interior woodwork, furniture, bath tubs, etc. A very high grade enamel finish.

"Mellotone"

Fourteen Colors

Flat colors for walls and ceilings. The most beautiful, practical, washable, durable, sanitary, economical of wall coverings.

Prepared Wall Size

For first coats under "Mellotone."

Transparent Varnish Primer

A remarkably good article. Saves two coats of varnish and gives fine results.

Prepared Wood Filler

In paste form. Three shades.

Vernicol Floor & Varnish Stain

Eleven Colors, Clear and Ground Color

Completes work with one application, combining stain and varnish coats. Special simple graining system.

Oil Stain

Eight Colors

For painters' use. Will not raise the grain of the wood.

Graining Colors

Popular colors.

Distemper Colors

For fresco painters and decorators.

Carriage Gloss Colors.

Eight Colors

Very high grade. A varnish paint, giving hard, glossy surface. Especially adapted for radiators, steam pipes, etc.

Aluminum Paint

For radiators, gas fixtures, ornamental work, etc.

"Little Blue Flag" Inside Rubbing Varnish

A fine inside finish that hardens quickly and rubs well.

"Little Blue Flag" Quick Action House Varnish No. 64

A very hard drying varnish of light color. Works easily, dries hard, can be rubbed and polished.

"Little Blue Flag" Elastic Interior House Varnish

A pale, medium drying varnish with high gloss, great durability, and water resisting power.

"Little Blue Flag" Crystal Finish

An extremely pale varnish especially made for fine interior finish over light woods or white enamel. Does not change the color.

For Floors

Hard Drying Floor Paint

Eight Colors

A varnish paint. Dries hard and quickly and gives beautiful effects. Very high grade, durable and economical.

Vernicol Floor & Varnish Stain

Eleven Colors, Clear and Ground Color

A very attractive and durable stain for new or old floors. Stain and varnish at one application. Special simple graining system.

"Little Blue Flag" Durable Floor Varnish

A hard drying and very tough varnish. Will not show heel marks, is not easily scratched and will wear indefinitely. May be used on hard or soft woods.

For Amateur House Use, Screens, Wagons, Etc.

Decorative Enamel

Ten Colors

Gives hard, glossy and durable enamel finish. In small cans.

Household Paint

Twenty Colors

A line of ready mixed oil paint—easily applied by anyone. Put up in small packages.

Screen Paint

For wire cloth, window and door screens. Flows easily. May be applied by anyone.

Carriage Gloss Paint

Eight Colors

Acknowledged to be the best varnish paint offered today for repainting buggies and carriages.

Wagon Paint

Five Colors

For preserving farm wagons, agricultural implements, etc., at a low cost. Ready for use.

THE LOWE BROTHERS COMPANY

"HIGH STANDARD"

Paintmakers-Varnishmakers

Dayton, O. Boston New York Chicago Kansas City





